

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LOME 01578 131007Z
ACTION SCS-06

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 CA-01 L-03 HA-05 CIAE-00
INR-10 NSAE-00 /036 W
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R 121100Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY LOME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4143

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EO 11652: N/A
TAGS: CASC TO
SUBJ: STATUS OF ASSOCIATION OF BAPTISTS FOR WORLD EVANGELISM
(ABWE)

REF: A LOME 1564 B LOME 1565 C LOME 1566

1. IN RESPONSE TO REQUEST BY THE LOCAL LEADERSHIP OF SUBJECT GROUP, I TOLD PRESIDENT EYADEMA IN MEETING TODAY (MAY 12) THAT THE RECENT RESOLUTION OF THE TOGOLESE NATIONAL PARTY TO AUTHORIZE ONLY SIX MAJOR RELIGIOUS GROUPS MIGHT AFFECT SOME FOUR OR FIVE AMERICAN MISSIONARY FAMILIES WHO WERE WORKING WITH THE PENTECOSTAL CHURCH (A FULL LIST OF SANCTIONED AND NON-SANCTIONED RELIGIOUS GROUPS IS CONTAINED IN LOME 1565). I SAID THAT MOST OF THIS GROUP PROBABLY BELONGED TO THE PENTECOSTAL CHURCH BUT THAT THERE WAS ANOTHER GROUP WHO WERE ESSENTIALLY MEDICAL MISSIONARIES, NAMELY THE ASSOCIATION OF BAPTISTS FOR WORLD EVANGELISM (ABWE).
I SAID THIS GROUP HAD INFORMED THE EMBASSY THAT THEY COULD NOT IN GOOD CONSCIENCE SHELTER THEMSELVES UNDER THE AUTHORIZATION PROVIDED FOR THE BAPTIST CHURCH BECAUSE THEY CONSIDERED THEMSELVES A DIFFERENT SORT OF BAPTIST OR PERHAPS A SPECIAL SORT OF BAPTIST. I EXPLAINED THAT THE GROUP WAS WORKING WITH BLIND PEOPLE AND WAS ABOUT TO SEND A MEDICAL TEAM TO TOGO AND I HANDED OVER TO HIM A DESCRIPTION OF THEIR ACTIVITIES.
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2. HE SHOOK HIS HEAD AND ASKED ME IF THEY WERE BAPTISTS. I SAID THEIR NAME INDICATED THAT THEY WERE BAPTISTS. HE SAID HE DID NOT SEE THE PROBLEM; IF THEY WERE BAPTISTS THEY WERE BAPTISTS AND IF THEY WERE BAPTISTS THEIR ACTIVITIES WERE AUTHORIZED. I SAID THAT I WOULD CONVEY THIS MESSAGE TO THE LEADERSHIP OF THE GROUP.

3. LOCAL LEADERSHIP ABWE HAS BEEN INFORMED OF GIST OF THIS
DISCUSSION. PALMER

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